



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

CHURCH AND RUINS OF ST. MARY'S, NEW ROSS.

Few towns in the kingdom abound more in monastic ruins than New Ross, a beautiful town situated on the united streams of the Nore and Barrow, with their tributary waters, which, as it were, after inviting many fertile counties to pour their rich produce into their natural market or emporium, meet like faithful guides, who had before parted to direct others to the goal, and whose united testimony now affords confidence to the traveller. Ross is said to be the spot which nature had destined for that station, which is denied her by a stronger neighbouring interest, Waterford, "*Mantua, nœ miserae, nimum vicina Cremona*," and the cool apathy of those whose welfare is alike concerned.

The town rises an ascent on the eastern bank of the Barrow, whose waters here can float a ship of a thousand tons. A beautiful wooden bridge connects the town with the village of Rosbercon in the County of Kilkenny. The fine quay, about seven hundred yards in length, is terminated at either end by houses fronting each other, as if forbidding it to extend one foot farther; but industry and increasing intelligence will, in time, dash down these barriers, and afford that convenience her trade and commerce may require.

There is scarcely a spot in the town where the antiquarian will not find various monuments of monastic ruins—scarcely an excavation made, but some sculptured fragment is to be met with, or a subterranean passage discovered; and so plenty are these curiosities, that "money dreamers" seldom dig without a probability of meeting some relic or other. In making the new line of road along the river side, there was lately discovered a subterraneous passage excavated from the solid rock, and leading to the river. Various are the surmises respecting its intended use; the most probable is, that it was formed by smugglers, in former times, for the more secret landing of their booty.

There were several abbeys within the walls of the town, but they all shared the same fate which the rude hand of invaders, or the still ruder hand of time, have thought fit to bestow on many others in the country. One was situated at the northern, or St. John's gate, another at the southern, or Priory gate—the Abbey of St. Saviour's in Friars'-lane, and St. Mary's Abbey, which commands a view of the surrounding country, and overlooks the town from the eastern side, a view of which is given in the present number.

This building was so perfect as to admit of divine service being performed in it so late as the year 1811 or 1812, when the western aisle was injudiciously taken down to make room for the present church, which, compared to its ancient predecessor, is but a rude heap of stone and mortar. There is a cemetery under the pile, which extends, should we believe popular tradition, under the greater part of the town. However, certain it is, that archways have been discovered stretching in the direction of the abbey, and persons are somewhat deterred entering the cemetery, from the story of a soldier who once entered the "Black-hole," as the entrance is called, provided with a lantern, and accompanied by a dog. The dog returned, but his ill-fated master affords a lesson to the incautious antiquarian. Another story, equally believed, is told of some persons who attempted to take down the cross from the chancel wing, but whose brains were dashed out for their impious temerity. Underneath the cross are two slabs, of rude sculpture, supposed to represent these persons. Stone coffins have been found; but the most perfect monument, and the best specimen of bye-gone days, is the tomb of Rose Macroom, which is in the northern wing, and of which a correct drawing shall shortly be laid before the readers of the Journal.

An ancient story is told of the murder of the friars of St. Saviour's by some sailors or fishermen, who suspected them of an improper familiarity with their wives during their absence; and the vulgar point out the blood-like appearance on the stones, in the neighbourhood of that abbey's site, as the friars' blood, but which a mineralogist would perceive at once to be hematite.

They further believe, that the town is under a curse on this account, and that the sun never bestows a smile on it. I should have mentioned that this blood-like appearance is to be seen on the entrance to the "Black-hole," and he would be a great philosopher indeed who could to their minds explain the cause which produces the effect.

With respect to the curse, it would be set aside by the introduction of capital, the encouragement of manufactures, the employment of the poor, and the exertions of the proprietor of the town to induce a spirit of industry amongst its inhabitants.

G. H.

New Ross, August 1835.

A GHOST STORY.

The "Extraordinary Adventure" in your Journal of the 19th of October, reminds me of a similar story which I have heard told in former days.

Some years ago, a gentleman travelling in one of the central counties of Ireland, being benighted in a very lonely country, pushed on his horse to the residence of an acquaintance, which he understood was in the neighbourhood. He soon arrived at the gate, where, to his enquiries, the keeper answered through the bars, that the family were in Dublin, and had been there for three years, without having visited their country seat; the cause of this, he mysteriously hinted, was that the house was said to be haunted; indeed, he had himself heard the "spirits."—The traveller asked many questions, and learned that the "ghost" was heard every night walking through all the rooms of the house, making a noise like the clanking of chains; and this took place at midnight exactly; no one would, for any consideration, approach the house after nightfall. The traveller, however, must have some shelter; and, as he could obtain a lodging nowhere else, insisted on being admitted to the house; besides, he cared not for ghosts, he had seen many of them abroad, and he thought he could easily manage an Irish one. The steward, bewailing the stranger's obstinacy, at length opened the gate, and, giving the traveller's horse to his son, led the way to the house. The night was pitch dark, and the traveller saw nothing, till they arrived at the hall door, which indeed presented no very inviting aspect; it was hung on one hinge, and dashed to and fro with the wind; the light, shining through the doorway, dimly showed the hall, the appearance of which was equally repulsive; it was half filled with old lumber, which was covered with dust; and withal seemed so drear and gloomy that the traveller almost repented of his determination. He had not, however, much time for reflection, for the steward put the light in his hand, telling him he dare not go farther, and left him, pronouncing some prayers for his safety, mingled with which his guest thought he heard some indistinct mutterings. The traveller, now alone, traversed the hall, and by the second door on the right, entered a room, which, the keeper had informed him, was one of the least injured by neglect; its furniture had not been removed, and, contrasted with the hall, the apartment had an air of comfort which surprised him. He sat down, placing his light and pistols on the table before him. His mind for a while gave way to that indefinable species of mingled fear and curiosity, which can be conceived only by those who have been in similar circumstances. He soon, however, recovered his natural resolution; he felt some misgivings of the steward, which he had indeed from the beginning of this adventure, and which partly had encouraged him to proceed so far.

It was now twelve o'clock, and, as he listened intently, he thought he heard a faint and distant sound, like the clanking of a chain. Holding the candlestick in one hand, and a pistol in the other, he stepped into the hall. The noise seemed to approach, and now to die away; at one time it was above, and again it seemed to come from below. Again it drew near, and was evidently overhead; he went up stairs, examined the drawing-room floor, while the noise seemed to retire before him; he also searched the apartments above, without success; he descended again; the sound was louder; he followed it through se-

veral rooms, communicating with each other, and which led him again to the landing place; here he thought he heard plainly the sound of chains rattling down the stairs, and now and then he could distinguish a hasty and heavy tread, unlike, he thought, a "spirit's" airy gait. He pursued the noise till he reached the last of a suite of rooms on the parlour floor. Lying against the wall of this apartment were several planks of wood, behind these he imagined the sound had died away. Placing the light upon the floor, he proceeded to remove these planks, and having displaced a few of them, disclosed to view—the "ghost"—the steward himself, who, terrified by so adventurous a pursuit, and, at being thus discovered, acknowledged that he was the sole author of the "Ghost Story;" that he had taken these means to frighten his master away, lest he should be detected in his fraudulent management of the estate. I need scarcely add, that, on the representation of the traveller, the faithless steward was shortly afterwards dismissed the service, and another appointed.

I have no doubt that many of the "ghosts," who infest the numerous "haunted houses" in Ireland, would, if examined into as resolutely as was the case I have related, prove to be of a similar species.

Sounds, which the imagination construes into the sighs and lamentations of the "spirits" of the dead, are frequently produced by natural and very trivial causes, of which you have given an instance in your 18th number. I may mention another instance. A certain house in Dublin remained empty for some years, in consequence of the fame of its being haunted by a screaming ghost; which was afterwards discovered to be devised by a malicious neighbour, who produced the frightful sound by shouting through a tube he had placed, for the purpose, in the wall dividing the two houses. L. E.

IRELAND AS IT WAS FIFTY YEARS AGO.

SIR—It is now a month since I returned to my native land, from an absence of forty-three years on the Continent. The greater part of that time has been spent among our gay and fascinating neighbours, the French; but the charms of continental society have never effaced from my heart that affection for the land of my birth, which formed at a very early period of life a distinguishing characteristic of my mind. Amid the splendours of Paris, and the magic enchantment of Parisian coteries, "my heart, untravelled, still returned to home;" and Ireland, and her sons and daughters—her scenes of frank and jovial hospitality, of city bustle, or of rural stillness—kept constant possession of my recollection. The remembrance was gilded, too, with all the warm colouring of a youthful fancy; I was only twenty-three when I left my native country, and as she appeared to me *then*, so she ever has presented herself to my memory during my involuntary exile. I left her, gay, prosperous, industrious, and happy; and she always retained the same appearance in my fond imagination. But first I must say one word or two about our friends, the French. Oh! they are *de braves gens*! I like them much, and I should be very ungrateful if I did not; for I received from them, not only the politeness for which their nation has obtained deserved celebrity, but also much and real kindness. Notwithstanding the attention I received from those whose attention was an honour, my heart always yearned after home—my memory ever dwelt with affection on the various political parties in Ireland, because they were Irish; time and distance mellowed away all their harsher features, and only permitted me to recollect, that their members were "sons of the green isle." I had seen reviews in the Phoenix Park under Charlemont, at which the gay, the noble, the beautiful, and the courtly, had been present; in which the leaders of both interests in the Irish Lords and Commons had exhibited their military prowess. I remembered the streets of Dublin crowded for six months in the year with coroneted equipages; I remembered the magnificent hospitality of which the town mansions of our nobility and gentry were the scene during the parliamentary session, and which was transferred at its expiration to their noble country residences. In a word, I had left Dublin in 1792 a great and prosperous metropolis, in every cor-

ner of which was heard the cheering hum of thriving and remunerated industry; and notwithstanding the reports of its decay which from time to time reached my ears, I was both unwilling and unable to believe in the total desertion of its aristocracy, until personal observation convinced me of the melancholy fact. Mr. Editor, cast your eyes over Watson's Almanack for the year 1790, a copy of which lies at this moment on my table; look at the "Peerage of Ireland" in that compilation; look at the list of their residences, and you will find that ninety-six of our nobility then kept town houses in Dublin. At this distance of time it may not be uninteresting to trace the parts of the town which they chiefly inhabited.—Twelve peers lived in Stephen's-green in 1790; nine in Upper Sackville-street; seven in Merrion-street; seven in Kildare-street; seven in Henrietta-street; and eleven in Rutland-square. These were the places most thickly inhabited by the noblesse, the remainder of whom were scattered through the other streets and squares. Three lords lived in Grafton-street—Lord Dunsany, Lord Massy, and Lord Donoughmore. Henry-street was graced with the residence of *two*—one of whom was my Lord Londonderry, and the other Lord Kilmaine. Look at the list of the House of Commons for 1790, and, oh! what a glorious catalogue of resident gentry!—men whose incomes Grattan averaged at £4000 a-year each, and almost all of whom kept town houses. Foster, the Speaker, lived in Molesworth-street, in a large, high, old-fashioned mansion, with three or four gables next the street. Alas, alas! the houses, no doubt, are still here, but the inmates—how woefully changed! Instead of *ninety-six* peers, I believe that only *eight* (including four prelates) now keep town houses in Dublin; and of this wretched remnant, the lay peers scarcely ever pass a day in their mansions! Then as to the untitled portion of the aristocracy, the greater number of the mansions whose owner's incomes then averaged £4000 a-year, are now inhabited by persons whose incomes I do not think would average £200 per annum! The loss to Dublin of all classes of the aristocracy may fairly be rated at half a million a-year; and the loss to the kingdom of Ireland is incalculable. And then, in the intervals of their sessional duties, they used to repair to their country seats, diffusing around them the blessings of employment, expenditure, protection, and encouragement. I shall never forget the delightful hospitalities of a Christmas I passed at Castle Forbes, in the County of Longford, with Lord Granard; the worth, the hospitality of his amiable family, and their active and successful exertions for the happiness and comfort of the neighbouring peasantry, more than realized the charming picture which the author of the Sketch Book draws of Bracebridge-hall and its benevolent inmates. I there met Grattan, Warden Flood, Francis Hardy, (the biographer of Lord Charlemont, and at that time member for Mullingar,) Barry Yelverton, and the late Daniel Toler, who was then M.P. for Tipperary, and as honest, rattling, dashing, an Irishman as ever I knew. What a coterie! Wit as bright and sparkling as our noble host's champagne—fox-hunting *galore*, which, whatever may be urged against it, I will always maintain to be at once the most innocent, delightful, and healthful of field sports. But do not suppose that our time was exclusively devoted to amusement. No. Our host was deeply impressed with a sense of his duty to his native land; he knew that his property, his happiness, his respectability, were derived from the toil and the sweat of his humbler fellow-countrymen; he knew that the sacred words, "THE LAND WHICH THE LORD THY GOD HATH GIVEN THEE," implied, upon his part, a moral, indefeasible duty of protection and of residence, and he acted up to this conviction. Sir, this was the scene at Castle Forbes—but *in those days* it was no solitary instance; hundreds and hundreds of Irish proprietors afforded similar examples. In those days absentees were comparatively rare—as rare as great resident proprietors are at present, and that is rare enough in all conscience. Lord Granard established premiums for agricultural excellence among his tenantry; and the ladies of his amiable family used constantly to visit the farm-houses on his estates, encouraging industry, neatness, and comfort, for which his lordship's generosity to his